

CHAPTER 22

Al-Hajj: The Pilgrimage

(REVEALED AT MAKKAH: 10 *sections*; 78 *verses*)

While the last chapter deals generally with the ultimate triumph of Truth in the world, this deals particularly with the triumph of the Truth at Makkah, whence the Prophet was now being expelled. The chapter is called *The Pilgrimage* because the proclamation of pilgrimage, originally made by Ibrâhîm, was now repeated by the Holy Prophet and addressed to the whole world, being no longer confined to the borders of Arabia.

The chapter opens with the mention of a terrible calamity which is, as it were, a preliminary to the triumph of Truth in the world. The second section asserts the certainty of Divine help to the Holy Prophet. The next section asserts the triumph of the believers, who were now fleeing by twos and threes to escape persecution by their cruel oppressors. Their triumph, however, involved the conquest of Makkah, for without that religious centre in their possession their triumph could not be complete. The fourth section speaks of the Sacred House and the pilgrimage to it. The connected subject of sacrifices is dealt with in the fifth; and the sacrifices which the Muslims themselves were now required to make, viz., the laying down of their lives in the cause of Truth, are spoken of in the sixth section, which introduces the subject of fighting. The opposition to the Holy Prophet is mentioned in the seventh, and the eighth states that the faithful will be established in the land. Allah's dealing, however, with even the opponents of the truth is merciful, and therefore the punishment is withheld for a while. This we are told in the ninth section, which also shows that mere differences of belief are not punished in this world. The tenth sums up the whole by showing that polytheism will ultimately be uprooted.

Rodwell is certainly wrong in placing this chapter among the latest Madînah revelations. Muir places it at the close of the Makkan sûrahs of the fifth period, and external as well as internal evidence tends to show the correctness of his view. Regarding vv. 39–41, however, it may be added that, though they speak of permission to fight, it does not follow that they were revealed at Madînah. For a full discussion of

this point, see 39a. It is noteworthy that the oath of allegiance taken by the Madînah converts at ‘Aqabah, before the Holy Prophet’s flight, contained a promise that they would fight in defence of the Holy Prophet. Such an oath would not have been taken if a revelation permitting fighting in self-defence had not been received by the Prophet.

SECTION 1: The Judgment

In the name of Allâh, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

1 O people, keep your duty to your *Rabb*; surely the shock^a of the Hour is a grievous thing.^b

2 The day you see it, every woman giving suck will forget her suckling and every pregnant one will lay down her burden, and thou wilt see men as drunken, yet they will not be drunken, but the chastisement of Allâh will be severe.

3 And among men is he who disputes about Allâh without knowledge, and follows every rebellious *shaitân*^a—

4 For him it is written that whoever takes him for a friend, he will lead him astray and conduct him to the chastisement of the burning Fire.

5 O people, if you are in doubt about the Resurrection,^a then surely We created you from dust,^b then from a small life-germ, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh, complete in make and incomplete, that We may make clear to you.^c And We cause what We please to remain in the wombs till an appointed time, then We bring you forth as babies, then that you may attain your maturity. And of you is he who is caused to die, and of you is he who is brought back to the worst part of life,^d so that after knowledge he knows nothing. And you see the earth barren, but when We send down thereon water, it stirs and swells and brings forth a beautiful (growth) of every kind.^e

1a. *Zalzala* means originally *he put him into a state of commotion or agitation* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane). It is noteworthy that the word is specially used in connection with wars implying a casting of terror into the heart. Thus in 33:11 and also in a prayer of the Prophet the word is used in connection with the terror or affliction of war. And *zalâzil*, which is plural of *zalzalah* means *difficulties, trials, afflictions* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane).

1b. In the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, *al-sâ'ah* or the *Hour* does not necessarily imply the Day of Judgment. It often implies the time of judgment in this life, the time when the threatened doom overtakes a people, and this seems to be the significance here. Some consider that a severe shaking of the earth is meant as a sign of the approach of the great judgment, but even in that case it might imply any terrible calamity, such as a great war.

3a. The *shaitân* here is, as very frequently in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, the *shaitân* in human form.

5a. The word *ba'th* (raising) is used in three senses in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, viz., (1) the raising of the dead to life according to their good or evil deeds on the Judgment day; (2) the raising of the spiritually dead to life by the prophets; and (3) the raising up of prophets by Allâh for the guidance of mankind. The word as used here may include all three cases, whether it is the denial of the Resurrection or the denial of Allâh's raising the Prophet, or the denial of the Prophet's raising them to spiritual life. The argument contained in this and the following verses is equally applicable to all, but it most prominently refers to the spiritual resurrection of the dead.

6 That is because Allâh, He is the Truth, and He gives life to the dead, and He is Possessor of power over all things,

7 And the Hour is coming, there is no doubt about it; and Allâh will raise up those who are in the graves.^a

8 And among men is he who disputes about Allâh without knowledge, and without guidance, and without an illuminating Book.

5b. These words explain the meaning of Âdam's or man's creation from dust, which is frequently referred to in the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân, for all people are here spoken of as being created from dust. Man's creation from dust implies the ultimate springing of all life from earth.

5c. The various stages through which every human child passes are spoken of here; the object being to show how humble is his origin. Or, the reference may be to the various stages through which man has passed in his evolution to the present stage of perfection. Attention is thus drawn to the fact that, just as the physical evolution of man is gradual, so is his spiritual growth and development.

5d. By *the worst part of life* is meant *dotage* and *decrepitude* (*Al-Tafsîr al-Kabîr* (Commentary), by Imâm Fakhr al-Dîn Râzî).

5e. The stirring and swelling of the earth means its stirring and swelling with the growth of herbage. Compare 41:39, and see 41:39a. The illustration draws attention to the fact that revelation quickens dead hearts as rain quickens dead earth. The next verse makes it plain: *He gives life to the dead and He is Possessor of power over all things.*

7a. To understand what is meant by *those who are in the graves* compare 35:22: “Surely Allâh makes whom He pleases hear, and thou canst not make those hear who are in the graves”. The significance is that even the incorrigible will be raised to a spiritual life.

9 Turning away haughtily^a to lead men astray from the way of Allâh. For him is disgrace in this world, and on the day of Resurrection We shall make him taste the punishment of burning.

10 This is for that which your two hands have sent before, and Allâh is not in the least unjust to the servants.

SECTION 2: Certainty of Divine Help

11 And among men is he who serves Allâh, (standing) on the verge,^a so that if good befalls him he is satisfied therewith, but if a trial afflicts him he turns back headlong. He loses this world and the Hereafter. That is a manifest loss.

12 He calls besides Allâh on that which harms him not, nor benefits him; that is straying far.

13 He calls on him whose harm is nearer than his benefit. Certainly an evil guardian and an evil associate!

14 Surely Allâh causes those who believe and do good deeds to enter Gardens wherein flow rivers. Allâh indeed does what He pleases.

9a. *Thâniya* ‘itfi-hî signifies literally *folding up, twisting, or turning his side*, ‘itf meaning *the side of a man from the head to the hip*, but the expression is used metaphorically to signify *behaving proudly* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane) or *turning away* (*Al-Mufradât fî Gharîb al-Qur’ân* (Dictionary of Qur’ân), by Shaikh Abu-l-Qâsim Al-Husain al-Râghib al-Isfahânî).

11a. *‘Alâ harf* (literally, *on the verge*) is variously explained, the ultimate significance being in all cases the same. *Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane quotes many of these explanations. It either means *standing aloof with respect to religion in a fluctuating state, like him who is on the outskirts of the army, who, if sure of victory and spoil, stands firm but otherwise flees*; or, the meaning is, *who serves Allâh in doubt or suspense, being unsteady like him who stands on the edge of a mountain, or who serves Allâh in one mode of circumstances, i.e., when in ample circumstances*. All these explanations indicate the attitude of a man who wavers, being ready to quit the faith on any pretence.

15 Whoever thinks that Allâh will not assist him in this life and the Hereafter, let him raise (himself) by some means to the *samâ’*, then let him cut (it) off, then let him see if his plan will take away that at which he is enraged.^a

16 And thus have We revealed it, clear arguments, and Allâh guides whom He will.

17 Those who believe and those who became Jews and the Sabians and the Christians and the Magians and the polytheists — surely Allâh will decide between them on the day of Resurrection. Surely Allâh is Witness over all things.^a

18 See you not that to Allâh makes submission whoever is in the *samâwât* and whoever is in the earth, and the sun and the moon and the stars, and the mountains and the trees, and the animals and many of the people? And many there are to whom chastisement is due. And he whom Allâh abases, none can give him honour. Surely Allâh does what He pleases.^a

15a. This passage is misconstrued on account of a misconception in connection with the personal pronoun *hu* in *yansura-hu* (“assist him”), which refers really to the Holy Prophet. The second difficulty is in connection with the object of *yaqta’*, i.e., *cut (it) off*, which is understood as being really the Divine assistance, which the opponents are told must come to the Holy Prophet, however hard their struggle against that Divine assistance, and this is clearly indicated by the concluding words of the verse. The prophecies of the final triumph of the Truth and of the coming of Divine assistance to the Holy Prophet were repeatedly declared in the Arabic Glorious Qur’ân, and the disbelievers were enraged at this. They are told that the Divine assistance must come, and that they should leave no stone unturned in their struggle against it, insomuch that, if they could, they should rise to heaven and cut off all heavenly or Divine assistance

from the Prophet. Or, the meaning may be that they may carry their anger to the greatest possible extremity and be driven to the utmost desperation, yet they will be unable to stop the coming of Divine help. The meaning is in either case that Divine assistance, which is promised to the Prophet, will come to him most surely, however hard the struggle carried on against him, or however great the disappointment of the opponents.

17a. It is implied that differences in religious beliefs do not call for punishment in this life; these will be decided on the Day of Judgment. Punishment in this life is brought upon those who work mischief and transgress all limits in doing evil.

Prostration

19 These are two adversaries^a who dispute about their *Rabb*. So those who disbelieve, for them are cut out garments of fire. Boiling water will be poured out over their heads.

20 With it will be melted what is in their bellies and (their) skins as well.

21 And for them are whips of iron.^a

22 Whenever they desire to go forth from it, from grief,^a they are turned back into it, and (it is said): Taste the chastisement of burning.

SECTION 3: Believers are Triumphant

23 Surely Allâh will make those who believe and do good deeds enter Gardens wherein flow rivers — they are adorned therein with bracelets of gold and (with) pearls. And their garments therein are of silk.^a

24 And they are guided to pure words, and they are guided to the path of the Praised One.

18a. The recital of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 7:206a.

19a. The two adversaries are the believers and the disbelievers. It should be noted that the enmity of the two parties, whose original difference is only a *dispute about their Rabb*, is now assuming a graver aspect, and the fate of the two in the coming conflicts is clearly foretold — of the disbelievers in verses 19–22, and of the believers in verses 23, 24.

21a. The *iron whips* indicate *holding in subjection*. *Qama‘a-hû*, the root from which *maqma‘*, meaning *whip*, is derived, signifies *he held him in subjection and brought him to submission* (*Tâj al-‘Arûs* (Dictionary), by *Imâm Muhibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faid Murtaḍâ*).

22a. *Min ḡhamm-in* (from grief) explains *min-ha* (from it), and thus explains the nature of the chastisement in this and the previous verse. It is a grief which will constantly burn their souls so as to melt them.

23a. The following incident, mentioned by Baihaqî, shows that the companions of the Prophet understood these prophecies in another sense too: “The bracelets of Kisrâ, the Persian monarch, were brought to ‘Umar and he caused Surâqah, son of Malik, to wear them, on which he praised the Almighty”. The reason for ‘Umar causing the bracelets to be worn by Surâqah is also given by the same authority in another report, according to which the Holy Prophet had said to Surâqah: “How will you feel when you wear the bracelets of Kisrâ?” (*Khaṣa‘is al-Kubrâ*, volume ii, p. 113).

25 Those who disbelieve and hinder (men) from Allâh’s way and from the Sacred Mosque, which We have made equally for all men, (for) the dweller therein and the visitor.^a And whoever inclines therein to wrong, unjustly, We shall make him taste of painful chastisement.

SECTION 4: Pilgrimage

26 And when We pointed to Ibrâhîm the place of the House, saying: Associate naught with Me, and purify My House for those who make circuits and stand to pray and bow and prostrate themselves.

27 And proclaim to men the Pilgrimage:^a they will come to you on foot and on every lean camel, coming from every remote path:^b

28 That they may witness benefits (provided) for them, and mention the name of Allâh on appointed days over what He has given them of the cattle quadrupeds; then eat of them and feed the distressed one, the needy.^a

25a. Or, *‘âkif* may signify *the dweller in Makkah*, and *bad*, *the dweller in the desert*, or the two may respectively signify *one who dwells in it constantly* and *one who comes to it occasionally*. The disbelievers, being then in possession of the Sacred

Mosque, prevented the Muslims from using it. They are told that this state of things will be brought to an end, for it must be open to all visitors, and that could only be brought about by the Muslims being made masters of it.

27a. The words are addressed to the Holy Prophet, and contain a mighty prophecy that Makkah will become the centre to which men will come for pilgrimage. It was announced just at the time when the Holy Prophet was being driven away from Makkah by his enemies, who were the sole masters of the place. Just when Makkah seemed to have lost every chance of becoming a Muslim centre, and when the Muslims themselves were in danger of being entirely destroyed, a mighty prophecy is announced in the most forcible words that Islâm will spread to all countries of the world, and Makkah will become the universal centre to which pilgrims from all nations will resort.

27b. The *lean camel* is particularly mentioned here to indicate the great distances from which the pilgrims would come. The addition of the words *from every remote path* shows that people will come from the remotest parts of the earth.

29 Then let them accomplish their needful acts of cleansing, and let them fulfil their vows and go round the Ancient House.^a

30 That (shall be so). And whoever respects the sacred ordinances of Allâh, it is good for him with his *Rabb*. And the cattle are made lawful for you, except that which is recited to you, so shun the filth of the idols and shun false words,

31 Being upright for Allâh, not associating aught with Him. And whoever associates (aught) with Allâh, it is as if he had fallen from on high, then the birds had snatched him away, or the wind had carried him off to a distant place.

32 That (shall be so). And whoever respects the ordinances of Allâh, this is surely from the piety of hearts.

33 Therein are benefits for you for a term appointed, then their place of sacrifice is the Ancient House.

SECTION 5: **Sacrifices**

34 And for every nation We appointed acts of devotion that they might mention the name of Allâh on what He has given them of the cattle quadrupeds. So your Deity is One Deity, therefore to Him should you submit. And give good news to the humble,^a

28a. The subject of sacrifice is one that is specially related to the pilgrimage, because every pilgrim must sacrifice an animal. Thus it is the lesson of *sacrifice* that is taught in pilgrimage. It may be added that the act of the pilgrim finds an echo throughout the Muslim world, for every Muslim who can afford is required to sacrifice an animal on this occasion, and this subject is discussed in the next section.

29a. The mention of the Ka‘bah as the Ancient House, here and in verse 33, shows that it is so old that it came to be known throughout Arabia by that name, thus pointing to its very remote antiquity; see 2:125a.

35 Whose hearts tremble when Allâh is mentioned, and who are patient in their afflictions, and who keep up prayer, and spend of what We have given them.^a

36 And the camels, We have made them of the signs appointed by Allâh for you^a — for you therein is much good. So mention the name of Allâh on them standing in a row. Then when they fall down on their sides, eat of them and feed the contented one and the beggar.^b Thus have We made them subservient to you that you may be grateful.

34a. The principle of sacrifice is one which is accepted in one form or another by all nations of the world; but it has a deeper meaning in Islam. The outward act is still there, as of old, but it no more conveys the meaning attached to it in ancient religions, viz., that of appeasing an offended Deity, or that of serving as atonement for sins. It signifies the sacrifice of the sacrificer himself, and becomes thus an outward symbol of his readiness to lay down his life, if required, and to sacrifice all his interests and desires in the cause of Truth. Hence it is that words introducing the subject of sacrifice are immediately followed by an injunction to submit oneself entirely to Allâh, Who is the *one Deity*, i.e., the only Being Who deserves to be made the true object of one’s love.

35a. It is by the mention of Allâh’s name that an animal is sacrificed, and the meaning underlying it is that their own hearts should *tremble* at the mention of that name. Thus they should bear in mind, when sacrificing an animal over which they hold control, how much more necessary it is that they should lay down their lives in the way of Allah, Who holds control over all. Hence a verse speaking of sacrifices is immediately followed by one which requires the exercise of great patience and endurance under hard trials by the faithful. The sacrifice of an animal is thus a reminder to man that he must be ready to sacrifice his own life in the cause of Truth.

36a. The meaning conveyed here is the same as that in the previous verse. The camels which are brought for sacrifice to Makkah by the pilgrims are here stated to be only outward signs of the true way of life as prescribed by Allâh of Allâh, that way of life as prescribed by Allâh being no other than the way of life as prescribed by Allâh of entire submission and of laying down all one has, even one's life, in the way of Allâh.

36b. The flesh of the animals sacrificed is not to be wasted, but it should serve as food for the poor and the needy. The burying of the flesh of the numerous sacrifices at Makkah on the occasion of the pilgrimage is not in accordance with any injunction of the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân or any saying of the Holy Prophet. It can be turned to good use.

37 Not their flesh, nor their blood, reaches Allâh, but to Him is acceptable observance of duty on your part.^a Thus has He made them subservient to you, that you may magnify Allah for guiding you aright. And give good news to those who do good (to others).

38 Surely Allâh defends those who believe. Surely Allâh loves not anyone who is unfaithful, ungrateful.^a

SECTION 6: Believers permitted to Fight

39 Permission (to fight) is given to those on whom war is made, because they are oppressed. And surely Allâh is Able to assist them^a—

40 Those who are driven from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our *Rabb* is Allâh. And if Allâh did not repel some people by others, cloisters, and churches, and synagogues, and mosques in which Allâh's name is much remembered, would have been pulled down. And surely Allâh will help him who helps Him. Surely Allâh is Strong, Mighty.^a

37a. This verse settles conclusively that it is not the outward act of sacrifice, which is acceptable, but the deep meaning of *sacrifice* which underlies it. It should also be borne in mind that the idea of atonement is quite foreign to Islâmic sacrifice. It is the righteous whom Islâm requires to sacrifice, and this is hinted at in the words, *to Him is acceptable observance of duty on your part*.

38a. With this verse, which brings this section to a close, is introduced a new subject, the subject of fighting in the way of Allâh, which is dealt with at length in the following section. This sheds light upon the connection which exists between the two subjects. After dealing with the subject of sacrifice theoretically, the Muslim has in fact been prepared to bring into practice the theory of the sacrifice. Hence he is told that the time is near when he will be required to lay down his very life in the defence of Truth, which the opponents were striving to exterminate. Therefore, the subject of fighting in the cause of Truth is a fitting sequel to the subject of sacrifice, as casting further light upon the inner meaning of sacrifice, and also requiring that doctrine to be carried into practice.

39a. According to authentic reports, this is the earliest permission given to the Muslims to fight. There is nothing to show that this verse was not revealed at Makkah. On the other hand, it was owing to this revelation that in the well-known oath of allegiance taken at ‘Aqabah, the Holy Prophet required a promise from the Madînah deputation that they would defend him against his enemies even as they would defend their own children. The words in which the permission is granted show clearly that war was first made on the Muslims by their opponents; and secondly, that the Muslims had already suffered great oppression at the hands of their persecutors. The words of the next verse, *those who are driven from their homes*, may refer to the emigration to Abyssinia, or to the exodus to Madînah, which commenced soon after the ‘Aqabah allegiance was sworn.

41 Those who, if We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and enjoin good and forbid evil. And Allâh’s is the end of affairs.

42 And if they reject you, already before them did the people of Nûh and ‘Âd and Thamûd reject (prophets),

43 And the people of Ibrâhîm and the people of Lût,

44 And the dwellers of Midian. And Mûsâ (too) was rejected. But I gave respite to the disbelievers, then I seized them; so how (severe) was My disapproval!

45 How many a town We destroyed while it was iniquitous, so it is fallen down upon its roofs; and (how many) a deserted well and palace raised high!

46 Have they not travelled in the land so that they should have hearts with which to understand, or ears with which to hear? For surely it is not the eyes that are blind, but blind are the hearts which are in the breasts.^a

40a. The devotional freedom which was established by Islâm thirteen hundred years ago has not yet been surpassed by the most civilized and tolerant of nations. It deserves to be noted that the lives of Muslims are to be sacrificed not only to stop their own persecution by their opponents and to save their own mosques, but to save churches, synagogues and cloisters as well — in fact, to establish perfect devotional freedom. The mosques, though they are the places where the name of Allâh is remembered most of all, come in for their share of protection even after the churches and the synagogues. Early Muslims closely followed these directions, and every commander of an army had express orders to respect all houses of worship, and even the cloisters of monks, along with their inmates.

47 And they ask you to hasten on the chastisement, and Allâh by no means fails in His promise. And surely a day with your *Rabb* is as a thousand years of what you reckon.^a
48 And how many a town to which I gave respite while it was unjust, then I seized it! And to Me is the return.

SECTION 7: **Opposition to the Prophet**

49 Say: O people, I am only a plain warner to you.

50 So those who believe and do good, for them is forgiveness and an honourable sustenance.

51 And those who strive to oppose Our messages, they are the inmates of the flaming Fire.

52 And We never sent a messenger or a prophet before you but when he desired, the *shaitân* made a suggestion respecting his desire; but Allâh annuls that which the *shaitân* casts, then does Allâh establish His messages. And Allâh is Knowing, Wise^a—

46a. It should be noted that the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân very often speaks of the blind, the deaf and the dead, meaning thereby the spiritually blind, deaf and dead, as it has plainly stated here.

47a. Those spoken of here are undoubtedly the opponents of Truth who were to come later, and who have been allowed to oppose the advance of Islâm for a thousand years.

Compare 20:103a, 104a. The set-back which Islâm was to receive for a thousand years is again spoken of in 32:5; see 32:5a.

52a. Some careless commentators mention here the false story relating to what the Christian critics call “the Lapse” of the Prophet. The Prophet, they say, on this occasion recognized that the idols worshipped by the Arabs could intercede with God on their behalf. That such a thing never happened is shown in 53:21a. This story has been rejected by all sound and reliable commentators. Thus Ibn Kathîr says: “Many commentators relate here the story of the *Gharânîq* ... but it is from sources not traceable to any companion”. According to *Al-Tafsîr al-Kabîr* (Commentary), by Imâm Fakhr al-Dîn Râzî, *commentators who aim at accuracy and truth say that this story is false and a forgery. Al-Jâmi‘ al-Musnad al-Sahîh* (Hadîth), by Al-Imâm Abû ‘Abd Allâh Muḥammad ibn Ismâ‘îl al-Bukḥârî makes similar remarks.

The words do not, and cannot, mean that when a prophet recites a revelation, the *shaitân* introduces his own words into his recitation. It is absurd on the face of it and the Arabic Glorious Qur’ân belies it when it says: “He makes His secrets known to none, except a messenger whom He chooses. For surely He makes a guard to go before him and after him that He may know that they have truly delivered the messages of their *Rabb*” (72:26–28). Moreover, it is absolutely inconceivable that such an important incident as the Prophet’s having accepted the intercession of idols should have been mentioned in the Qur’ân eight years after it happened. The 53rd chapter, in which the change is said to have taken place, was revealed before the fifth year of the Prophet’s call, while this chapter was revealed on the eve of the Prophet’s departure from Makkah. That more than half the Qur’ân should have been revealed during this long period without a single reference to the alleged story, and that it should then have been quite unnecessarily referred to in a chapter where it is quite out of place, is alone sufficient to give the lie to this story.

Now take the words. *Tamannâ*, according to all lexicologists, signifies *he desired*, and according to *Tâj al-‘Arûs* (Dictionary), by Imâm Muḥibb al-Dîn Abu-l-Faîd Murtaḍâ, *tamannâ* signifies *the desire to attain to that which is liked by one*. Now, what every prophet desires is the establishing of the Truth that is revealed to him, and it is with this desire of every prophet that the devil interferes, instigating men, *making suggestions to them*, as stated here, to oppose the Truth. That this is the true meaning is also shown by the context, which deals with the establishing of the Truth and the desire of the opponents of Truth to annihilate it. See the previous verse,

which condemns those who fight and contest with the Prophet to render him unable to establish the Truth in the world. And here we are told that the plans of the enemies will be frustrated and Truth will be established in the world.

53 That He may make what the devil casts a trial for those in whose hearts is a disease and the hard-hearted.^a And surely the wrongdoers are in severe opposition,

54 And that those who have been given knowledge may know that it is the Truth from thy Lord, so they should believe in it that their hearts may be lowly before Him. And surely Allah is the Guide of those who believe, into a right path.

55 And those who disbelieve will not cease to be in doubt concerning it, until the Hour overtakes them suddenly, or there comes to them the chastisement of a destructive day.^a

53a. The *shaitân*'s strivings against the Prophet become a trial for the weak, who are unable to endure the severe persecutions of their enemies.

55a. *'Aqîm*, applied to a womb, means *barren*; applied to wind, it signifies *such as does not fructify* (*Arabic-English Lexicon* by Edward William Lane); hence *al-rîh al-'aqîm* in 51:41 means a *destructive wind*, and *yaum 'aqîm* here a *destructive day*, i.e., a day bringing no good. This verse, as well as the two following, prophesy the establishment of Truth — for that is the kingdom of Allâh — and the discomfiture of the power of evil.

56 The kingdom on that day is Allâh's. He will judge between them. So those who believe and do good will be in Gardens of bliss.

57 And those who disbelieve and reject Our messages, for them is an abasing chastisement.

SECTION 8: The Faithful shall be Established

58 And those who flee in Allâh's way^a and are then slain or die, Allâh will certainly grant them a goodly sustenance. And surely Allâh is the Best of providers.

59 He will certainly cause them to enter a place which they are pleased with. And surely Allâh is Knowing, Forbearing.

60 That (is so). And whoever retaliates with the like of that with which he is afflicted and he is oppressed, Allâh will certainly help him. Surely Allâh is Pardoning, Forgiving.^a

61 That is because Allâh causes the night to enter into the day and causes the day to enter into the night, and because Allâh is Hearing, Seeing.^a

58a. The mere occurrence of the word *hajarû* (they fled) in this verse does not show that it was not revealed at Makkah, for a flight of the faithful to Abyssinia had taken place as early as the fifth year of the Call. Moreover, it should be noted that the Holy Prophet, with Abû Bakr and ‘Als, were the last men to depart from Makkah on the occasion of the second flight. A true and generous leader of men, he waited to see his faithful followers depart before he left, so that their safety might be ensured. There is no doubt that if he had left his followers behind him, they would have encountered a very hard fate at the hands of an exasperated enemy. The reference to some being slain after their fight is clearly prophetic.

60a. This verse permits the Muslims, who were long persecuted and oppressed, to punish their persecutors, but at the same time recommends pardon and forgiveness by referring to those two attributes of the Divine Being in the concluding words of the verse.

62 That is because Allâh is the Truth, and that which they call upon besides Him — that is the falsehood, and because Allâh — He is the High, the Great.

63 See you not that Allâh sends down water from the cloud, then the earth becomes green? Surely Allâh is Knower of subtilities, Aware.

64 To Him belongs whatever is in the *samâwât* and whatever is in the earth. And surely Allâh — He is the Self-Sufficient, the Praised.

SECTION 9: Divine Mercy in dealing with Men

65 See you not that Allâh has made subservient to you all that is in the earth, and the ships gliding in the sea by His command? And He withholds the *samâ’* from falling on the earth except with His permission. Surely Allâh is Compassionate, Merciful to men.^a

66 And He it is Who brings you to life, then He causes you to die, then He will bring you to life. Surely man is ungrateful.

61a. Apparently the succession of the day and the night refers here to the turn of fortune hinted at in the previous verse, because an oppressed community could not punish its persecutors unless it gained the mastery over them. The same is indicated in the two attributes of the Divine Being with which the verse is closed. The verses that follow contain hints to the same effect.

65a. The first part of the verse gives a promise of victory to the Muslims, while the latter part warns the opponents that Allâh withholds the punishment from them for a time, for He is Compassionate and Merciful to men. The withholding of the *samâ'* means the withholding of the punishment, which the opponents were told would come down upon them from *samâ'*.

67 To every nation We appointed acts of devotion, which they observe,^a so let them not dispute with you in the matter, and call to your *Rabb*. Surely you are on a right guidance.

68 And if they contend with thee, say: Allâh best knows what you do.

69 Allâh will judge between you on the day of Resurrection respecting that in which you differ.

70 Know you not that Allâh knows what is in the *samâ'* and the earth? Surely this is in a book. That is surely easy to Allâh.

71 And they serve besides Allâh that for which He has not sent any authority, and of which they have no knowledge. And for the unjust there is no helper.

72 And when Our clear messages are recited to them, thou wilt notice a denial on the faces of those who disbelieve — they almost attack those who recite to them Our messages. Say: Shall I inform you of what is worse than this? The Fire. Allâh has promised it to those who disbelieve. And evil is the resort.

SECTION 10: Polytheism will be uprooted

73 O people, a parable is set forth, so listen to it. Surely those whom you call upon besides Allâh cannot create a fly, though they should all gather for it. And if the fly carries off aught from them, they cannot take it back from it. Weak are (both) the invoker and the invoked.^a

67a. The principle that all people were given devotional light is reiterated throughout the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân.

74 They estimate not Allâh with His due estimation. Surely Allâh is Strong, Mighty.

75 Allâh chooses messengers from angels and from men. Surely Allâh is Hearing, Seeing.

76 He knows what is before them and what is behind them. And to Allâh are all affairs returned.

77 O you who believe, bow down and prostrate yourselves and serve your *Rabb*, and do good that you may succeed.^a

78 And strive hard for Allâh with due striving. He has chosen you and has not laid upon you any hardship in *Dîn* — the faith of your father Ibrâhîm. He named you Muslims before and in this,^a that the Messenger may be a bearer of witness to you, and you may be bearers of witness to the people;^b so keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and hold fast to Allâh. He is your Protector; excellent the Protector and excellent the Helper!

73a. The verse, while truly describing the inability of false deities to create the lowest form of life or to exercise the least control over creation, contains a clear prophecy that the false deities will be removed from the Sacred House, and that both the worshippers and the worshipped will be helpless.

77a. The recitation of this verse is followed by an actual prostration; see 7:206a.

78a. The reference in *before* is to the revelation of Ibrâhîm, who prayed that from among his descendants there should arise a nation of Muslims (2:128), and in *this* to the Arabic Glorious Qur'ân. For the meaning of *Islâm* and *Muslim*, see 2:112a and 3:19a. The root word is *salm* or *silm*, both signifying peace (*Al-Mufradât fî Gharrîb al-Qur'ân* (Dictionary of Qur'ân), by Shaikh Abu-l-Qâsim Al-Husain al-Râghib al-Isfahânî), and a Muslim is therefore one who leads a life of peace, *peace with Allâh*, which means complete submission to His will, and *peace with man*, which means that he causes no injury to any man, as a saying of the Holy Prophet has it (Bukhârî 2:3).

78b. Compare 2:143, where similar words are used. The significance is that the Muslim community is destined to play the role of leader to the whole of humanity; see 2:143b.

Prostration